

Message Text

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43

ACTION IO-14

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TAGS: EAGR FAO

SUBJECT: 17TH FAO CONFERENCE - ADMISSION OF GUINEA-BISSAU TO
MEMBERSHIP

REF: ROME 12939

SUMMARY: BY SECRET VOTE 66 FOR - 19 (US) AGAINST - 20 ABSTENTIONS
CONFERENCE ADMITTED GUINEA-BISSAU TO FAO MEMBERSHIP. EARLIER
VOTE (ROLL CALL) ON WAIVING GENERAL RULES TO PERMIT LATE
APPLICATION BE CONSIDERED WAS 72 - 5 (US, BRAZIL, CHILE, PORTUGAL,
SPAIN) - 20. END SUMMARY.

1. IN PLENARY, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 26, MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
GUINEA-BISSAU WAS PRESENTED BY WAY OF THE REPORT OF THE GENERAL
COMMITTEE. IN ORDER ALLOW CONSIDERATION APPLICATION, WHICH
RECEIVED (NOV. 21) FOLLOWING BEGINNING OF SESSION AND NOT 30
DAYS IN ADVANCE AS REQUIRED BY GENERAL RULE XIX OF THE ORGANIZATION,
IT WAS FIRST NECESSARY TAKE VOTE ON WAIVER THIS RULE. SURPRISINGLY,
MEMBERS WHO WERE NOT EARLIER WILLING TO WAIVE RULES TO (A)
RESTORE VOTINGRIGHTS OF PARAGUAY WHOSE CONTRIBUTION IS
SUFFICIENTLY IN ARREARS AND (B) ALLOW ELECTION OF UN-OPPOSED
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CANDIDATE FOR POST OF INDEPENDENT CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL,
WERE STRONGLY IN SUPPORT OF SETTING RULES ASIDE TO PERMIT
CONSIDERATION OF GUINEA-BISSAU APPLICATION. POSITIONS OF A
NUMBER OF COUNTRIES, AUSTRALIA, BELGIUM, GERMANY, JAPAN, WHICH

VOICED OPPOSITION AND GREAT CONCERN WHEN APPLICATION FIRST KNOWN, SOFTENED CONSIDERABLY OVER THE WEEKEND. AS ILLUSTRATION OF THIS, EUROPEAN COMMUNITY NATIONS WERE STILL CAUCUSING MINUTES BEFORE MATTER WAS INTRODUCED. THEY FINALLY AGREED UNANIMOUSLY TO ABSTAIN ON WAIVER, THEREBY MAKING NO PUBLIC EFFORT OPPOSE APPLICATION.

2. IN INTRODUCING THE ITEM THE CHAIR MOVED TO VOTE IMMEDIATELY ON THE WAIVER. THE U.S. INTERVENED AT THIS POINT TO ASK THAT THE SECRETARIAT PROVIDE FULL DETAILS ON THE "NUMBER OF OCCASIONS" (REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE) ON WHICH EARLIER CONFERENCES HAD WAIVED GENERAL RULE XIX. IN DOING SO THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE SPOKE OF THE SERIOUS ATTITUDE WHICH THE CONFERENCE TRADITIONALLY HAS TAKEN CONCERNING ITS RULES AND REGULATIONS AND STRESSED THE OBVIOUS REASON FOR THE 30-DAY RULE, I.E. TO PERMIT MEMBERS TO GIVE ADEQUATE STUDY TO MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS AND SEEK CLARIFYING AND/OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH MIGHT BE REQUIRED.

3. THE SECRETARIAT BRIEFLY RESPONDED TO THE U.S. QUERY BY EXPLAINING THAT THE ABOVE-MENTIONED "NUMBER OF OCCASIONS" WAS REALLY TWO, THE APPLICATIONS OF AFGHANISTAN AND SWEDEN. THE CHAIR ASKED IF THE U.S. WAS SATISFIED WITH THE EXPLANATION.

4. THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE RESPONDED BY SAYING IT WAS INFORMATIVE BUT NOT REALLY HELPFUL WITH REGARD THE APPLICATION OF GUINEA-BISSAU. HE CALLED ATTENTION TO THE CONSISTENT SUPPORT OF THE U.S. FOR SELF-DETERMINATION WITH REGARD TO AFRICA AND ALL OTHER AREAS OF THE WORLD AND STATED THE U.S. INTENDED TO MAINTAIN THIS PRINCIPLE. AT THE SAME TIME AND WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE RECOGNITION OF NEW STATES, THE U.S. CUSTOMARILY LOOKED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CERTAIN FACTS BEFORE EXTENDING OFFICIAL RECOGNITION. HE SAID THESE INCLUDE EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER A CLEARLY DEFINED TERRITORY AND POPULATION, AN ORGANIZED GOVERNMENTAL ADMINISTRATION OF THAT TERRITORY AND A CAPACITY TO ACT EFFECTIVELY IN CONDUCTING FOREIGN RELATIONS.

5. TANZANIA THEN RAISED A POINT OF ORDER AND THE CHAIRMAN
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(ZAMBIA) ASKED THE U.S. TO COMMENT ONLY ON THE PROPOSED WAIVER OF THE RULES. THE U.S., BEING ALLOWED TO CONTINUE, SAID THIS WAS THE NATURE OF HIS REMARKS BUT THAT HE WOULD BE BRIEF. HE EXPLAINED THAT SINCE THE U.S. HAD NOT BEEN SATISFIED REGARDING QUESTIONS RELATED TO RECOGNITION, IT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SUPPORT THE GUINEA-BISSAU APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP AND THEREFORE WOULD BE COMPELLED TO VOTE NO ON A PROPOSAL TO WAIVE THE ORGANIZATION'S RULES IN ORDER TO PERMIT THE APPLICATION'S CONSIDERATION.

6. THE VOTE BY ROLL CALL WAS THEN TAKEN. THE RESULT WAS 72-5-20. ONLY THE U.S., BRAZIL, CHILE, PORTUGAL AND SPAIN WERE OPPOSED. THE FOLLOWING ABSTAINED: AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, CANADA, ECUADOR,

FRANCE, GERMANY, HONDURAS, IRELAND, ITALY, JAPAN, KHMER REPUBLIC, KOREA, LUXEMBOURG, NEW ZEALAND, NICARAGUA, PARAGUAY, PERU, SWITZERLAND, U.K., AND VENEZUELA. THE FOLLOWING WERE AMONG THE MEMBERS EITHER NOT PRESENT OR NOT VOTING: BOLIVIA, COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA, CYPRUS, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, ISRAEL, LEBANON, MALAWI, MAURITANIA, MAURITIUS, NEPAL, NIGER, POLAND, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, TURKEY, ZAIRE.

7. FOLLOWING THE DECISION TO WAIVE THE RULES, PORTUGAL EXPRESSED REGRET THAT AFTER HAPPILY WELCOMING FOUR NEW MEMBERS AT THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE, THEY WERE NOW BEING ASKED TO CONSIDER THE APPROVAL OF A STATE WITHOUT TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION, DEFINED TERRITORY, ETC. NIGERIA SPOKE ON A POINT OF ORDER AS DID MALI AND GUINEA SHORTLY THEREAFTER. IN BETWEEN THEIR INTERVENTIONS, THE PORTUGUESE DELEGATE CONTINUED TO QUESTION GUINEA-BISSAU'S ENTITLEMENT TO MEMBERSHIP AND CONCLUDED BY EXPRESSING REGRET AT WHAT HE CALLED "THE DISINTEGRATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW" WHICH HE FELT "WOULD DISCREDIT OUR ORGANIZATION."

8. THE SECRET VOTE ON MEMBERSHIP THEN TOOK PLACE. IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER THE U.K. DELEGATE EXPLAINED IT HAD VOTED AGAINST BECAUSE OF NON-RECOGNITION OF GUINEA-BISSAU BUT THAT UK CONTINUED TO SUPPORT SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL PEOPLES.

9. THE RESULTS OF MEMBERSHIP VOTE WERE ANNOUNCED AT THE OPENING OF THE AFTERNOON SESSION AS: FOR 66, AGAINST 19 (US) AND ABSTENTIONS 20. A LONG PARADE OF CONGRATULATORY AND ANTI-COLONIALIST SPEECHES WERE PRESENTED BY NIGERIA, GUINEA, CONGO, MOROCCO, CHINA, KENYA, JORDAN. TANZANIA (WHO SAID CONFERENCE WOULD SOON BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WELCOMING OTHER INDEPENDENT STATES FROM SOUTH AFRICA), IRAQ, SENEGAL, JAMAICA, ZAMBIA, LESOTHO, SYRIA, SIERRE LEONE, SUDAN, PERU, CUBA AND MALI.

10. COMMENT: GUINEA-BISSAU APPLICATION AT PRESENT SESSION OBVIOUSLY TOOK SOME COUNTRIES BY COMPLETE SURPRISE AND THEY WERE CAUGHT WITH SOMEWHAT GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS. IF ANYTHING, POSITIONS TENDED TO WAFFLE OVER WEEKEND AS CAPITALS WERE CONSULTED. AT NO TIME DID THERE APPEAR TO BE ANY REAL OPPORTUNITY OF BLOCKING EITHER PROPOSAL. DELEGATIONS GENERAL VIEW IS THAT WE TOOK CONSTRUCTIVE IF NOT SUCCESSFUL APPROACH WHICH GAINED RESPECT FOR U.S. IN FAO AND WITH MORE RESPONSIBLE MEMBERS. THIS FEELING SOMEWHAT SUPPORTED BY FACT U.S. MENTIONED IN ONLY ONE OF NUMEROUS SPEECHES WHICH LATER WELCOMED GUINEA-BISSAU. VOLPE

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